

A

REVIEW

OF THE

STATE

OF THE

BRITISH NATION.

Thursday, March 24. 1709.

I Know what Exceptions, Projects of Peace form'd without Doors, and built on private Opinion only, are subject to, and I know well what ill Success the Author of the *Daily-Courant* lately had in an Attempt of this Nature; but if every Shipwreck should fright a Mariner, no Body would go to Sea—— I am not afraid therefore of the Voyage, I may have better Luck, tho' I do not tell you, I am a better Pilot, than he that went before me, and miscarry'd.

The Eyes of the Town are all turn'd upon Peace, and all our News-Papers are full of it; some will have the *French* importuning us for it; others, that sufficient Concessions are made by them to found

it upon; others that Plenipotentiaries are going to *Flanders* actually to set the Treaty on Foot. I shall determine nothing of this; I am very hopeful Peace is in View, and that I gather from the Prudence of the Enemy we have to do with; whose Circumstances, tho' I do not believe Half of what is told us from abroad neither, are such as certainly make Peace more necessary to him than ever it was, and more wanted by him than by us, tho' at the same time we want it enough too.

Before I enter upon the Examination of Particulars relating to a Treaty of Peace, I must take Notice of what I already foresee growing upon us, I mean, Uneasinesses and Differences at home about the Conditions—

ditions—And let who will have the Honour of negotiating it, I take upon me to tell them, and I have some Reasons for my Suggestions from former Experience; let their Prudence and Caution in managing, their Faithfulness to the *British* Interest, their Success in finishing it, be what it will, they are not to promise themselves the Success of pleasing us.—We have some People among us will attempt to rob them of the Glory they should have; perhaps they may have the private Satisfaction of having acted like honest Men, and of having faithfully discharged their Trust, the Queen may be satisfy'd in their Conduct, wise, considering and impartial Men, that seek the true Interest of *England*, and understand it too, may be satisfy'd; and to a wise Man this will be enough.

But when we speak of Parties, I venture to say, we WILL NOT be pleas'd.—They that would be best pleas'd if you ask'd less, will first complain that you ask no more; they that hate the Advantages you gain, will make most Noise about the Advantages you miss; those that envy the Success of the War, will cry out loudest of your making Peace too soon; those that are most afflicted at what you take, will first abuse you that you do not take all.

I have seen something of a Peace made before, and have had the Honour to know more of its Circumstances than I shall repeat here.—The Clamour rais'd at the Treaty of Partition, was one of the principal Arguments that brought some People to approve of this War; tho' if I am to speak Nationally, it was not King *William's* making that Treaty made the War, but the *French* King's not standing to the Treaty he had made; from whence may be briefly observ'd.

1. That King *William*, (had the Treaty he made with *France* been observ'd) had prevented this War.
2. That the King of *France* has brought upon himself all the Dishonour of this War, as well as the Mortification of the ensuing Peace, by his Truce-breaking, Promise-breaking, Article-breaking, Faith-breaking Politicks.

To the first Article, I know, it will naturally be objected, by those that gratified their Spleen in affronting King *William* in whatever he did, that this War has been better than that Peace.—And since it is most insolently cast in as a Reproach upon the King's Prudence, by the Enemies of the Revolution, the making that Treaty, I cannot but in Reparation of that Wrong to his Memory endeavour to draw a Balance between what you then had by Stipulation, and what you are now like to obtain more, and set the Difference, which is, as our Merchants call it, the Net-Procure of the Voyage—Against the Blood, the Money, the Losses and Disasters of this last War, and thereby we shall see, whether we are Gainers or no, or whether King *William* had not made a better Bargain for us, than we, tho' with unexpected Success, are like to make for ourselves.

I think, this is a just and equal Way of casting Things up, I shall make no Reflections upon any.—The King indeed and those Gentlemen, who acted under his Majesty, have suffer'd Loads of Reflections and Reproaches.—Now, as all Actions are best try'd by their Ends, I cannot but think it a proper Time to examine past Things by present, and then we shall see, whether a right Judgment was made before or no.

We have seen publish'd in the *Daily-Courant*; a Kind of an Expostulation printed abroad, concerning the Kingdoms of *Naples* and *Sicily*, and Arguments rais'd from the *English* Interest in Trade, to move us against conceding those Kingdoms to the Duke of *Anjou*.—The same Paper has been publish'd in *Holland*, but as I am told, with differing Arguments relating to the *Dutch*; but it is evident to those who can see but a little Way into Things, That there is a certain Power in the World who will be against any Peace, but what may enlarge that Power to a Height beyond what is consistent with the Balance of *Europe*, for which the Confederates have been all this while fighting.—And from this and some other Observations on the present

present Posture of Affairs; I lay down these *Postulata*, as the Preliminaries of my future arguing upon the Subject of Peace.

1. It is as necessary to the Peace of Europe not to reduce *France* too low, as it is not to let *France* be too high.
2. There are some Conquests made by some Powers of Europe this War, which it is as necessary for the Peace of Europe should be restor'd, as those Conquests *France* has made.
3. There is a certain Potentate in the Alliance, whose over-balloancing Greatness it is as absolutely necessary to prevent, as it is to reduce that of *France*, which is already grown too high.

When I come to examine farther into these Things; I shall not be so shy of explaining my self, as perhaps some People think I shall be. We are told, that it is not left to the Crown of England to make a Peace that is disadvantageous to the Nation; tho' some way this may be true; yet I think on the other hand, by the same Rule the Crown is not bound to continue a War when it may be advantageously concluded, to satisfy the Caprice of every Mountebank Statesman. And the insisting on such Things as are of themselves not to be named, with the Expence, Hazard and Blood, still to be spent in a lingering War, is certainly a Piece of Policy that tends to the Damage, not to the Advantage of England.

Peace must, as I have said often, be Safe and Honourable. I shall hereafter a little enquire, what these Words contain; in the mean time I must note, that if by the Peace you take exorbitant Power from one, and give it to another, you are far from making your Peace Safe. The Safety of Europe, if I have any Fore-sight, lies now in our Hands to secure, and we may secure it. And this will effectually be done thus. There are but two Articles of exorbitant Power in Europe, one you may reduce, the other you may divide, and so bring both to a Balance; and this is the only Way to secure the Peace of Europe; this was done effectually by King William,

in the Treaty of Partitions; and I have the Honour to say, that to my certain Knowledge it was with this very Prospect. This the French King saw, and therefore together with the View of encreasing his own Power, broke the Articles. You have spent forty Millions, and many a thousand English Man's Life, to bring him to it again. And it is still my Opinion, that every Inch you add to Austrian Greatness more than was given by that Treaty, so many Steps you take to purchase your Posterity, the Happiness of spending as much Blood and Money to reduce German Tyranny, as it has cost us to reduce French Tyranny. And upon that Foundation I leave it.

If any Man take Offence at this Introduction, I demand but so much Justice, and beg so much Favour, that he will adjourn his Censure, till I have explain'd my self, and finish'd the Observations on this Head.

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